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ABSTRACT

This book advocates establishing "learning systems" that utilize all the educational resources of communities to connect and extend learning opportunities across a lifetime. The following are among the topics discussed: (1) the essence of lifelong learning and a learning society; (2) how and why people engage in free-choice learning; (3) the free-choice learning landscape; (4) learning from the inside out; (5) learning from the outside in; (6) learning during the early years of childhood; (7) older children as eager travelers on the road to learning; (8) adolescents' journey in search of a purpose; (9) young adults and learning in pursuit of new roads and new adventures; (10) middle-aged adults and learning to "walk the crest" and "avoid the ruts"; (11) learning among older adults; and (12) the free-choice learners' Bill of Rights. The following recommendations for building a 21st century learning society are offered: (1) focus educational reform efforts on individuals; (2) restructure all departments of education into departments of learning to encompass all types and degrees of lifelong learning; (3) establish a lifelong learning budget for every citizen; (4) create, train, and support a cadre of personal learning coaches; and (5) develop new models of assessment focusing on individual growth and development. (Contains 153 references.) (MN)

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